

THE
OMNISCIENCE
OF THE
Son of GOD,
AN
Undoubted ARGUMENT
OF HIS
DIVINITY:
BEING A
DISCOURSE

Upon St. MARK XIII. 32.

*I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot
BEAR them now, John xvi. 12.*

By W. WOTTON, D. D.

L O N D O N;

Printed by W. BOWYER for TIM. GOODWIN, at the
Queen's Head against St. Dunstons Church in Fleet-
street, 1720.

(Price One Shilling.)

KNOWLEDGE

OF THE

Son of God

Unlimited Love

DIVINITY

DISCOVER

THE SON OF GOD

D.D.

LONDON

Printed by W. Bowyer, at the Crown Office, in the Strand.

(Price One Shilling)



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ERRATA.

Page 8. line 3. for Acts the *ii* read *ii*. p. 8. l. 7. from bottom *r.* the Participle *Mascul.* p. 8. l. 8. from bottom *r.* ומצריק. p. 15. l. 24. *r.* what the Signs. p. 16. l. 4. from bottom *r.* as it is in. p. 19. l. 23. *r.* call it the chosen. p. 24. l. 11. for ceremony, *r.* ceremonial Law. Ibid. l. 22. for explicative *r.* explicite. ibid. l. 3. from bottom *r.* if it is possible. p. 25. l. 16. *r.* Prophet that came. p. 36. l. 19. *r.* this Design. p. 42. l. 11. from bottom *r.* your God. p. 43. l. 6. from bottom *r.* confute it. p. 44. l. 22. *r.* of himself. p. 46. l. 4. from bottom for was impudently, *r.* as impudently. p. 52. l. 6. from bottom *r.* Evangelists. p. 52. l. 8. from bottom after fault with put (:)



MARK xiii. 32.

*But of that day and that hour knoweth
no Man, no not the Angels which are
in Heaven, neither the Son, but the
Father.*



IN the present Disputes concerning the Divinity of the Son of God, which was never more openly denyed than it is at this Time, nor more directly opposed in this Nation than it has been of late, there are no Texts of Scripture more greedily laid hold of, by those who will not allow *Jesus Christ* to be God, than such as seem to deny to him such Attributes of Divinity as are in their Nature Incommunicable to any Being not endued with infinite Powers. If *Jesus Christ* is not Omniscient, if he is not Omnipresent, if he is not Almighty, if he is not Eternal, he is not God; where-ever therefore these Attributes, applicable only to the Supreme God, seem to be denyed to our Blessed Lord in Scripture, either those Texts must be acknowledged to prove what at first view they appear to do, or some satisfactory Explication of them must be assigned, if we, who profess to believe that *Jesus Christ* is the second Person of the Holy and Undi-

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vided Trinity, would hope to persuade such as have scruples about it, to embrace, what we apprehend to be, a fundamental Article of the christian Faith.

Of these Texts none has been earlier made use of, or is now more commonly alleged against the Divinity of *Jesus Christ* than this famous Passage in *Mark xiii. 32. But of that Day and that Hour knoweth no Man, no not the Angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son but the Father.* If there was any particular *Day and Hour* of which the Son was *certainly ignorant*, how can we affirm from Scripture that he is *Omniscient*? And yet this he seems to aver of himself upon a very weighty Occasion, not long before his Passion, when his Disciples desired to know when that terrible Destruction of the Temple at *Jerusalem*, which he had just before foretold, should come to pass. For here he says that *none, no Person whatsoever, not the Angels, nor the Son knoweth when that Day and Hour shall be, but the Father only*, as *St. Matthew* relates it (*Mat. xxiv. 36.*) The Declaration that the Father KNOWETH what the Son did NOT KNOW, was what *stumbled* the most ancient Christians, even as long ago as the days of *St. Irenæus*, and is to this day a *Rock of Offence* to very many honest and conscientious Men, and such as believe the new Testament to be really the word of God.

I shall not therefore think my time mispent, if I offer at an Explication of these Words, which tho' not new in itself, yet has not been clearly made out in those late Discourses which have been dispersed upon these Subjects among us in this Nation, that have come to my Hands. My Notion in short is this; that the Angels did probably *not know* it, and that the Son was *not willing to make* that Day and that Hour *known*, which the Father had then reserved to himself, and which were in his own proper time fully and plainly to be revealed; and that tho' the words to us who have only the *Greek Translation* of
what

an Argument of his Divinity. 5

what our Blessed Lord said in *Syriac* (or as 'tis always call'd in the New Testament in *Hebrew*) may seem intricate, and very liable to Misinterpretation, yet it may be justly questioned whether the Disciples did not perfectly understand by those Words, all that our Saviour designed they should; namely, that that was not the proper season for that secret to be revealed. To refer this Text only to JESUS CHRIST, consider'd in his Humanity, as, after many of the most eminent of the ancient Fathers, some very 'learned and very excellent Men among our selves, have lately done, has this Inconvenience attending it, that however true this Interpretation may be in itself (and I am very far from denying it) yet it looks like begging the Question, and supposing the two Natures Divine and Human to be hypostatically united in the ΘΕΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΟΣ, to those who pretend to believe nothing of the Co-essential Divinity of the Son of God; and consequently will be of no manner of use to convince such as urge this Text against us, as I my self have more than once by experience found. For whereas this Text has been illustrated by what St. *Luke* says (*Luke* ii. 52.) that *Jesus increased in Wisdom and Stature, and in Favour with God and Man*: That I apprehend will not be at all satisfactory to those Gentlemen whom we have to deal with, because what St. *Luke* says is capable of but one single sense; namely, that the Child *Jesus*, who was indisputably born of the Virgin *Mary*, who was then but twelve Years old, who had just before disputed *with*, and confuted the Doctors in the Temple, at an Age when according to the Notions commonly receiv'd at that time among the *Jews*, he began to be a *Child of the Commandment*, that is, one who was obliged to study the Law, and to observe its Precepts; that that Child, I say, after his return to *Nazareth* with *Mary* and *Joseph* his supposed Father, *increased in Wisdom and Stature, and in Favour with*

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with God and Man. This is the only Sense of which these Words are capable, and consequently they have not (as I believe) been misinterpreted by any Reader whatsoever.

So also when our Lord is said to be a hungry, to weep, to be in an Agony, and to desire that that Cup might pass from him, to ask where they had buried *Lazarus*, with several other Passages of a like Nature, there is no danger that those Texts should be misunderstood, because they only prove that *Jesus Christ* was really endued with Human Nature, not that the Divine Nature was not united with the Human.

But in the Text before us, the Case is otherwise: Our Lord speaks of the Son (*i. e.* of himself) as a superior Being to the Angels, and next in order to the Father (by whom the Disciples certainly understood the supreme God) and as one who alone knew the Father, and who was certainly sent by him into the World, to reveal his Will to Mankind; so that here the Disciples might justly understand this *Ignorance*, mentioned by these two Evangelists, not to be *absolute* but *relative*, *i. e.* not that he did *not know that day and hour*, but that he did not think that to be a proper time to reveal that particular season to them or to the rest of the *Jews*.

I readily grant that the words, as they lye in our Version and many others, imply *absolute Ignorance*. 'Ουδεις οιδεν *none knoweth*; not, *no Man* as we here and in several other places mistranslate it, but *no Person, no intelligent Being knoweth*; for the Question here is not whether any Man knew it, but whether the Angels, or the Son were Ignorant of it. Now in the *Hebrew*, both that of the Old Testament, and that spoken in *Judaea* under the New, the same Verb according to its several Conjugations (as the *Hebrew* Grammarians call them) may either signify *an Action*, or the *necessary*

sary Concurrence of the Author of that Action; as in the case before us, to know or to make known; and the Conjugation *Hiphil*, which properly signifies the Concurrence of the Author of the Action with the Action it self, is often used for the Conjugation *Kal*, by which the Action barely, and the Person or Persons that did it are specify'd, without any additional Sense, by which their special Concurrence is to be understood. Thus *Jada* the Root in *Kal* is only *he knew*; but *Hodia* in *Hiphil* is *he made known*; and so on through the several Tenses or Times past, present, or to come. Since therefore the form *Hiphil* was frequently used for the form *Kal* (as is indisputable to those who are acquainted with the *Hebrew Bible*) the Hearers could many times only judge by the Connection and the Nature of the Sentence, how such a Verb was to be understood: Thus for instance in *Matt. v. 45*. in our Version it is, *God maketh his Sun to rise*; in Greek it is, τὸ ἥλιον αὐτῷ ἀνατέλλει; that is literally, *he riseth (not raiseth) his Sun*. St. Jerom rightly renders this *Hebraism* (for such it truly is) *solem suum oriri facit*; and therein we as rightly follow him. In Greek, where these several ways of declining of every Verb are not known, it looks like a * *Soloecism*. St. Matthew literally translated what our Saviour said in *Hebrew*. If it had been ὁ ἥλιος αὐτῷ ἀνατέλλει, *his Sun riseth*, it had been agreeable to our ways of speaking; tho' since there is no ambiguity in the Words, it was an easy thing to render them truly as our Lord originally meant them.

There is another Conjugation in the *Hebrew Language*, in which the *Personal Concurrence of a Man's self in any Action*, is emphatically exprest. This they

* — Negatus Artifex sequi voces. Persius in Prologo.
 SEQUI hic valet FACERE SEQUI; est enim unum verbum locorum
 duorum positum: significat autem exprimere, dicere. If. Ca-
 saubon. in locum.

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call *Hithpabel*; that Conjugation is understood (tho' it could not be express'd in one word) in Greek in *Acts* 11. 40. in St. *Peters* Exhortation to the *Jews* in his first Sermon at the great Pentecost: The words in Greek are, Σώθητε ὑπο τῆ γενεᾶς τῆς σαρκαίης ταύτης. This we truly translate, *save your selves from this untoward Generation*. In *Hebrew* this would be *Himmatelu*, or *Hinnatselu*, or some other equivalent word *deliver your selves*. The Greek σώθητε *be ye saved*, does by no means fully express what the *Jews* perfectly understood when St. *Peter* spoke to them in their own Language; tho' here also there is no great danger of being mistaken, since σώζεσθαι is used for being *delivered from an imminent danger*. These instances, to which many more might be added, shew that many times the Concurrence of the Author of the Action with the Action it self, was understood in *Hebrew*, which does not always appear in our Versions in which such a Concurrence is usually express'd by a *Periphrasis*.

In that glorious Prophecy, *Dan.* xii. 3. of the Blessedness of the successful Teachers of Righteousness in the next World, the words in our Bibles are, *They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the Stars for ever and ever*. The same mistake is committed by our Translators here, which I apprehend them to have made in their translating of the οὐδείς οὐδεν in St. *Mark*, and from the same cause: The words in the *Hebrew* are these, והמשכילים יזהירו כזהר חהר הרקיע ומצורקי הרבים ככוכבים לעולם ועד: *Hammascilim* here, according to the proper force of [the *Mascil* Participle in *Hiphil* is, *They that make Men wise*, not *they that are wise themselves*, as we erroneously translate it. In the Margin indeed of our Bibles, it is *Teachers*. This is better than the other, and the word *Mascil* is in other places sometimes so used; yet even that here is scarce sufficient, because it is daily seen that

that Men may take pains to teach those that will not learn. But in this Text the Antithesis is between *they that make Men wise*, and *they that turn many to Righteousness*, where the Hebrew Participle *Matsdike* is also in *Hipbil*, and truly rendered by *they that turn to Righteousness*. So that this second Participle *Matsdike* determines the sense of *Mascilin*; and tho' *Mascilin* is sometimes taken for *wise* and *prudent Men*, as if it were in *Kal*; yet the opposition here of the two Participles plainly shews that they are both to be interpreted after the same manner. Here the lxx hath mis-led St. Jerome, and the joint authority of these most ancient Versions has influenced our Interpreters. In the lxx the words are these, *οἱ συνιέντες λάμπουσιν ὡς ἡ λαμπρότης τοῦ στερώματος. οἱ συνιέντες* is *they that are wise*, not *they that teach or make Men wise*. St. Jerome renders them thus, *Qui autem docti fuerint, fulgebunt quasi splendor Firmamenti; Et qui ad justitiam erudiunt multos, quasi stellae in perpetuas aeternitates*. St. Jerome here translates *Humatsdike* right; *qui ad justitiam erudiunt*, *they that turn to Righteousness*. The first *Hammascilim* he translates by *docti*, *wise*, *learned*, as the lxx had done it by *συνιέντες* before.

This instance of turning a verb in *Hipbil*, as if it were in *Kal*, is taken out of the Greek Bible. Whereas in our Text it may perhaps be alleged by those who are willing to continue the Dispute, that there I imagine words to have been spoken by our Lord to his Disciples in *Hebrew*, which perhaps never were said, or at least which I can never prove to have been said by him. How can I tell when our Lord said that in the *Hebrew*, which is rendered by *ידעו* in St. Matthew and St. Mark (which we translate *no Man knoweth*) that he thereby meant *none maketh or will make known the Day and Hour*? I cannot indeed positively tell what the original words were: But since there is a certainty (as I shall here-

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after prove) that HE KNEW ALL THINGS; and since the Genius of the *Hebrew* Language might naturally lead the Evangelists to use words in *Greek*, that might not fully express the force of the original words which our Lord spake in the *Hebrew* Tongue; and since in that very Translation of *Daniel*, which is literally quoted in these Gospels the self same mistake is made in a Text of very great moment, the probability of my Interpretation of this famous passage will incontestably appear, especially since it otherwise wants not evident Proofs.

Accordingly therefore I apprehend, that what our Blessed Lord designed to acquaint his Disciples with in this Text, was no more than this, that neither the Angels nor the Son intended *then to make* that Day and that Hour *known*, but that the Father would in his proper time reveal it. Thus he gave all Glory to the Father (which he constantly did when he was upon Earth, and acted as his Ambassador and the Interpreter of his will to Mankind) and at the same time that he checked their Curiosity, he told them so much as was of real use to them then to be made acquainted with.

When our Lord soon after told them *that all things that he had heard of his Father he had made known unto them*, John xv. 15. he did not absolutely mean *all the things*, even that related to them, that he had heard from his Father, but only *all that was then expedient for them to know*. I will repeat it again, because it is exceedingly remarkable in the Case before us, that in this Prophecy concerning the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, *Jesus Christ* gave his Disciples only such Signs as were necessary for the safety of the Christian Church then growing in *Judaea*, and stopt there, without going one step farther: He told them that *Jerusalem* should be surrounded by foreign Armies; and it was actually besieged by *Cestius Gallus* the Governour of *Syria*, about three Years and

and a half before *Titus* utterly destroyed it. It was not then entirely invested, so that great numbers might easily make their escape; the zealots soon raised the Siege, and fortify'd the Temple, which was the second Sign, as I shall shew hereafter. Then it was high time for the Christians, and those among the *Jews* that were inclined to peaceable measures to run away. These Signs were in the highest degree necessary for the faithful to know that they might give those, who should be involved in that dreadful Calamity, warning when they must labour to make their escape. The *individual Day or Hour* when *Jerusalem* was finally to be destroyed, was not of any concern to them (who were designed to be snatch'd as Firebrands out of the Fire) to know; and therefore it was not revealed, only they were assured that its Destruction should be soon, very soon, before that Generation was all gone, lest any of those who should hear this Prophecy should be tempted to linger about *Jerusalem* and stay behind. And thus, when the Glory of *knowing this individual time* was ascribed to the *Father only*, they also would *give him the Glory*, as the Son always did in every thing that he did or said. And after all, if the words in Question were so far designed to be ambiguous, as that the Disciples should not fully understand what he meant by his *not knowing that Day and Hour*, it is no more than what he did all along in Discourses concerning *himself*, both to them and to the People, till within a few minutes before he was betrayed by *Judas* in the Garden.

This now being premised, I shall shew

I. That the *Son* here meant, was not really ignorant of this Day and Hour.

II. That the signs of the coming of this Day and Hour, here foretold, and which literally came to pass before *some*, whom our Blessed Lord then spoke to, *did tast of Death*, are so particular, that even from

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them, any Man who rightly understands this Chapter, must conclude, that he who could and did foretell those signs of that time's drawing on, certainly knew when that time should come.

III. That this is not the only Passage in which our Saviour exprest himself in ambiguous terms, to his Disciples as well as to the People who enquired any thing of him concerning himself.

IV. That one may easily discern when our Lord intended to speak plainly in the New Testament, and when he did not.

V. That there were great and weighty Reasons why these and many other things, then only darkly hinted at, were not fully made known whilst *Jesus Christ* was here upon Earth.

I. That our Lord was not ignorant of the precise time, when *Jerusalem* was to be destroyed, as I understand the Text, or of the day of Judgment, as many eminent Interpreters both ancient and modern understand it, will I think, evidently appear to any Man who considers *what* the Disciples said to our Lord, *John* xvi. 30. and *when* and *why* they said it. When our Lord had finished the last Supper which he ate with his Disciples the night before he suffered, and had instituted the Eucharist, which he did as soon as Supper was over, he conversed for some time with the eleven Disciples (for *Judas* was then gone) just before he went into the Garden where he was betrayed by *Judas* into the hands of the Officers and the Soldiers, who came from the High Priest and Council to apprehend him. That Discourse turned chiefly upon Topics of Consolation to those Disciples who had all continued faithful, of which Consolation they would soon stand in the utmost need, when once he was taken from them. A great part of that Discourse was conceived in such dark terms, that they were at a loss to understand his meaning. He told them *that he was to go away*

to him that sent him, and yet they so little knew what he meant by going away, that none of them asked *whither goest thou?* John xvi. 5. He said *a little while and they should not see him, and again a little while and they should see him, because he went to the Father,* ψ. 16. This when they did not yet understand, after having said several other things obscurely to them, at last he said, *These things have I spoken to you in PROVERBS, the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in PROVERBS, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father,* ψ. 25. and then adds in direct words, *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the World; again, I leave the World and go to the Father,* ψ. 28. This they plainly understood, and indeed they could not well do otherwise, for there was no manner of ambiguity in these last words: He said he came into the World from the Father, which World he should quickly leave and return again to *him* from *whom* he came. To this they reply'd in these remarkable words, *Lo now thou speakest plainly, and speakest no PROVERB, now are we sure that thou KNOWEST ALL THINGS,* ψ. 29, 30.

The word *Proverb* here answers to the *Hebrew* word *Masbal*, which is sometimes rendred *Proverb* (Παροιμία) and sometimes *Parable* (Παράβολη.) It usually signifies an *AE*nigmatical or *Figurative* Discourse or *Sententious Aphorism*, by which the mind of the speaker is declared (tho' not always clearly) to those that hear him. *Balaam's Prophecies*, which (especially the latter ones) were very obscure, are called *Mishle*, which we render *Parables* five or six times in *Numb.* xxiii. and xxiv. The *Apologues* of *Jotham* to the *Shechemites*, and of *Jehoash* King of *Israel* to *Amaziab* King of *Juda*, were properly what we call *Parables*. The *Parables* of our Lord with which he very often taught the People, and the *Allegorical Descriptions* of himself and his Church,

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Church, which he used to his Disciples, as well as to the rest of the *Jews*, many of which are preserved in *St. John's Gospel*, were of this Nature. And because what we call *Proverbs* are usually short Aphorisms, therefore *Solomon's Proverbs* (which are far from being always intelligible at first sight) are called *Mishle*, and the saying which *David* applied to *Saul*, *1 Sam. xxiv. 13.* when he upbraided him with his causeless pursuit of Him, an innocent Man, is called *Mashal Kadmoni*, an ancient Proverb. *As saith the Proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked, but mine hand shall not be upon thee.*

Let us see now the force of this Expression of the Disciples in this place, *THOU KNOWEST ALL THINGS:* They used it at the close of the Discourse just before the last Prayer, which their departing Lord made *with them* and *for them* to his Father: He had told them at first, that *in his Father's house were many Mansions*, and that he was going to prepare a place for them: That *whither he went they knew, and the way they knew.* When *Thomas* upon this said, *Lord we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?* *John xiv. 5.* *Jesus* said *I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.* He assured them that when he was gone, *He would pray the Father, and he should give them another Comforter, who should abide with them for ever, &c. 16.* That this Comforter was the *Spirit of Truth*, whom the *World* could not receive, because it saw him not, neither knew him, *&c. 17.* That in a little while the *World* should see him no more, but they should see him, and that then they should know that he was in the Father, and they in him, and he in them, *&c. 19. 20.* That the Comforter who was the *Holy Ghost*, whom the Father should send in his Name, should teach them all things, and bring all things to their Remembrance, whatsoever he had said unto them before, *&c. 26.* He dwelt long upon the Allegory of his being

ing the Vine, his Father the Husband-Man, and they the Branches, John xv. 1—8. These and several other things of a like Nature he spake unto them in Proverbs in dark, mystical and allegorical Expressions, but now says he, henceforth I shall no more speak to you in Proverbs, but shall speak plainly to you of the Father, from whom I came into the World, and to whom I return again. Upon this the Disciples owned that he spoke plainly, and KNEW ALL THINGS.

We have here a full and explicit Confession made by the Disciples, and not in the least contradicted by Jesus Christ, of the OMNISCIENCE of him, whom they owned to be the Son of God; who since he had during the whole course of his Ministry given Glory to God the Father, would not, we may be sure, in this weighty particular (when he had just before declared that he would no longer speak to them in PROVERBS) have left them in an error of that infinite Importance, and intirely inconsistent with what they then were instructed to believe. Now if he was Omniscient at that time, he certainly was so a day or two before, when he told them what signs should be of the Destruction of Jerusalem, tho' he might not think it proper then to acquaint them with the precise Day and Hour, when that terrible Desolation should fall upon the Jewish Nation, Polity and Temple. And I would have it observed, that both these Discourses between our Lord and his Disciples were made before his Resurrection, which I mention lest some should imagine that all Power was not given to him in Heaven and in Earth till after he was risen from the Dead, and consequently that supposing him to have been at any time Omniscient, yet he might possibly not be so before his Passion.

II. What has been argued already from the Declaration which the Disciples made to our Lord just before

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fore he was betrayed, manifestly shews that he [was] OMNISCIENT: So that we may from hence safely conclude that he who KNEW ALL THINGS could not be ignorant of that DAY and HOUR. But even without the assistance of that Text, we may fairly conclude it from what precedes and from what follows this Declaration in this xiii Chapter of St. Mark. It is all one to my purpose to prove the Omniscience of the Son, whether by the *Day and Hour* here be meant the precise time of the Day of Judgment, or of the Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. It is certain and denyed by none, that I know of, that the former part of this Chapter relates only to the latter, and tho' the immediately antecedent Words from *ψ. 24. to ψ. 28.* seem chiefly to relate to the Day of Judgment, yet what he says *ψ. 30.* that *that Generation should not pass away till all those things were done,* determines the whole Prophecy (at least as to its immediate and primary Completion) to the Destruction of Jerusalem, and of the second Temple, and with that to the Dissolution of the whole Jewish Polity, which never afterwards rose again; and so the most learned Interpreters among the Moderns understand it. Now if we understand this whole Chapter in this Sense, then we shall see that the Signs which our Lord points at are so very particular, that it will not be easy to imagine that he who directed his Disciples to them in such a regular manner following one another, could possibly be ignorant of the precise time that happen'd so soon afterwards. Of these Signs that which I shall insist chiefly upon, and which indeed carries the greatest difficulty, is the *Abomination of Desolation* (Βδέλυμα ἡ ἐρημώσεως) spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, standing in the holy place, Matt. xxiv. 15. or as in St. Mark standing where it ought not, Mark xiii. 14. These Evangelists quote the Prophet as he is translated into Greek, Dan. ix. 27. The words in the Hebrew are

are, על כנף שוקצים † upon the Wing, the Abominations of the Destroyer. This we render, for the overspreading of Abominations he shall make it desolate. Many eminent Men understand these words of the actual investing of Jerusalem under Cestius Gallus; and some think they relate to the last destructive Siege by Titus. This they are led to by what St. Luke says concerning this very matter, Luke xxi. 20. *When ye shall see Jerusalem compass'd about with Armies, then know that the DESOLATION* (Ἐρημώσις) *thereof is nigh.* Desolation is the word used in both places, and this encompassing the City by the Roman Armies, being truly βδέλυγμα (an Abomination) in more senses than one, many learned Men have interpreted the one by the other; but with submission to great names, I apprehend this βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, this *Abomination of Desolation* to have originally been meant by the Prophet Daniel of something else.

Josephus, who is without Controversy a good Witness in this Case, whatever I may apprehend him to have been in many others, Josephus I say informs us

† I would have it here observ'd that שוקצים Shikkutfim comes from שקץ Skikkets a Technical Word in the Mosaic Law originally appropriated to that set of Pollutions which spring from Bodies alive or dead that are unclean, as may be plainly prov'd from the very many Passages in Leviticus xi. in which that word is used. The more common word תועבה Thoavah signifies an abominable, a detestable thing of a Moral as well as a Legal Nature, and more frequently the former: and even when it relates to legal Pollutions, it is not often used with Reference to any particular sort of them. And accordingly it is remarkable that in Ezek. v. ii. viii. 20. where both sorts of Abominations are hinted at, the two Hebrew words Shikkutfim and Toavoth are set down. When therefore in this Prophecy of Daniel, we find the Shikkutfim upon the Wings of the Holy Place, which was literally compleated in the Abominations of those Zealots, whose Carcasses and Blood were scattered about the Sanctuary before its final Destruction, the curious Reader will be pleased to see a Technical Word used by the Prophet instead of a Common one.

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that the Divisions, the Tumults, and the mutual Slaughters of the *Jews* that were got together at that time in *Jerusalem*, were the immediate motives that induced *Titus* to come up and besiege the Town. Of the Party then in *Jerusalem*, some were for accommodating matters with an Enemy so vastly superior to them in Power, and from whom nothing less than utter ruin was to be expected at last; others again were as eagerly against it. Of those that were against making any manner of terms, the chiefest and the most mischievous were a crew of Robbers, who for their appearing concern for the Honour of God, which they could not bear to see prostituted to a *Gentile* Power, were called *Zealots*. This gang of Men had seized upon the *Holy Place* and fortified it. They had store of Engines which had been left in the Country by *Cestius Gallus* the *Syrian* Governour, when he besieged the City about three Years before. With these they shot from the *Pinnacles*, or *Battlements*, or *Wings* of the Temple, upon the Town, whilst those without (for the Temple was then shut up) shot likewise at them, by which means great numbers were killed on both sides; and the Temple became thereby polluted with the Blood of the Slain that were within it. This was literally an abominable thing; the daily service was intermitted, and the Sanctuary according to the *Jewish* Notions of the word was become desolate. This, which is fully warranted by *Josephus*, is the literal Explication of this remarkable Sign. The *Zealots* who killed many of the *Jews* in the City, were killed in their turn by them, when they were shot from the Town as they stood upon the *Battlements*. They were *על כנף* *al cenaph* upon the *Wings* of the *Holy Place* as *Daniel* speaks. *Canaph* is properly the *Wing* of a Bird, which is spread out when the Bird flies; thence by an easy Metaphor it came to signify the *Battlements* of any Building, and consequently of the
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the Temple, which are called Πτερυγία (*Wings*) by St. Matthew, Mat. iv. 5. and by St. Luke, Luke iv. 9. And thus the *Abominations of the Destroyer* (*Shikkut-sin Meshomem*) literally stood where they ought not, in or upon the holy place.

What I think justifies this Interpretation of this very remarkable Prophecy is, that we find it used in the first Book of *Maccabees*, for *Antiochus Epiphanes's* Profanation of the Altar, when he offered idolatrous Sacrifices upon it on purpose to profane it. *They set up the Abomination of Desolation upon the Altar, and builded Idol-Altars throughout the Cities of Judaea on every side* ἡγοδόμησαν ΒΛΕΑΥΓΜΑ ΕΦΗΜΩΣΕΩΣ ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιάζησιν. 1 Maccab. i. 54. It is certain that the *Jews* of that Age misunderstood this Prophecy. It is equally certain that that was not a final Desolation, since *Judas Maccabaeus* purify'd and dedicated the Temple anew, a few Years afterwards: Whereas after this Destruction when *Titus* had once made an end, and that what was determined was poured upon the desolate, the Temple was never built again, nor have the *Jews* restored the *Temple-Service* in that which was once the *Holy Place* (or as they call it in the *Chosen House*) to this very Day. And besides, the Text of *Daniel* directs us to this individual sign, and not to what had been formerly done by *Antiochus*. For there it is, ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερόν; upon the Temple, as the Greek Translators render the Hebrew *Al Cenaph*, upon the Battlements, which was the very place where this *Abomination* stood.

Here now we have a particular sign foretold by *Daniel*, and emphatically applyed by our Lord, which never happened before, or in any Siege except this, and which can never happen again. Wars, Famine, Divisions among unsuccessful and desperate Men, and investing of Cities by hostile Troops, tho' they were all actually accomplished in a most astonishing manner at that dismal time, yet were not

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peculiar to that time more than to others of like sort in their own Nature. But to have the Sanctuary filled with armed Men, who were often killed in the holy place, and who by being brought into the Courts of the Temple actually defiled it with the *Carcases* and the *Blood of the slain*, (which were *both of them* to the highest degree *abominable* by the Mosaic Law) was the distinguishing mark of this Calamity. This our blessed Lord bade his Disciples particularly mind, *Let him that readeth understand*. One of those Disciples then present at least, if not more, outlived those events. Then says our Lord, when these things happen, hasten your flight, be gone, leave the City, and leave the Country too; for nothing but the extreamest Misery will be the Portion of those that stay behind. If you are upon the tops of your Houses, run not in to take what you can carry away, but as in cases of suddain and impetuous Fires, save your selves as well and as fast as you can. St *Luke* indeed says nothing of this *Sign*, but only mentions the *encompassing the City* by the *Roman Legions*. But that had happen'd a little before, and then these two *subsequent Signs* strengthen one another. The Siege of *Jerusalem* by *Cestius Gallus* was plainly foretold by St. *Luke*, without any possible ambiguity in the Words as to the Siege it self, tho' without naming the General that should carry it on. The City was then *compassed by Roman Armies*, which it had never before been since *Pompey's* time: That then was the *first signal* given to the faithful to fly. The *second* soon after; for the *Zealots* being free'd from the apprehension of any dreadful Consequences of that Siege, and not fearing another, posselt with mad Rage, seized the Temple, and with the Ammunition which *Gallus* had left behind him in a hurry from thence, annoyed the Town. Thus what went before easily led the Disciples to understand what followed after. And here it is worth

worth observing, that when no *Sign* was given by the two former Evangelists, to direct the Christians when they should fly out of *Jerusalem*, except the *Abomination of Desolation*, which might not have been so easy to be understood at first sight, St. *Luke* who wrote after St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark*, gave a *second* in which they could not be mistaken, which was the *encompassing* the City by a foreign Army: When the subsequent Sign followed so soon after the antecedent, the hint which our Lord gave, *let him that readeth understand*, would naturally make them attentive. They would possibly reflect then, upon its having been misapplied once before, to the Profanation of the Altar under *Antiochus Epiphanes*, when he sacrificed to his *Pagan Deity*.

I am indeed aware that some admirable Commentators have understood this *investing* of *Jerusalem*, foretold by St. *Luke* of the last Siege by *Titus*; and they interpret the *Desolation* (*Ερημωσις*) there mentioned, of the final Destruction of that City and Temple; and to make this bear, they tell us that the City was not at first so closely encompassed, but that great numbers might easily escape. This Interpretation I cannot acquiesce in. The *Desolation* here meant was something discernible by the Disciples, and previous to the last Ruin. The Christians were directed to *read*, that they might *understand*, *i. e.* to attend diligently to that SIGN, lest by neglecting it they should be overwhelmed in the common Destruction, and be thereby irrecoverably lost. And tho' every *Destruction* of Cities and Countries, carries a *Desolation* along with it, yet since it appears by that History of the *Maccabees* (1 *Mac.* i. 39.) that they had formerly called a *Profanation of the Sanctuary*, a *Desolation*, the Christians of this time (who were not unacquainted with that story) would without Difficulty, know how to apply this *Abomination of Desolation* that had been so long before foretold by the Prophet

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Prophet *Daniel*, to this Profanation of the Holy Place by these mad Zealots.

Let us now a little compare all these Signs together. *Jesus Christ* foretold at first, that not one stone of all those goodly Buildings should be left upon another; that there should be Wars and rumours of Wars, when Nation should rise against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom, that there should be Famines, Pestilences and Earthquakes in divers places, that false Prophets and false Christs should arise, who should amuse them with destructive hopes of imaginary Deliverances; that Jerusalem should be encompassed by a foreign Enemy, who should at last make a final Destruction of it, and of all that was therein; that the Abomination of Desolation should stand in the holy place, where of all places in the World it ought not to have stood, and that all these things should come to pass, whilst some of the present Generation were still alive. Now when ALL THESE THINGS did literally come to pass, as our Lord had forty Years before foretold they should: When the full completion of these Prophecies is preserved to us by a Jewish Writer, who was concern'd in those very Troubles, and who did not preserve the Memory of them with any view of gratifying Christians, whose great Master had so long ago foretold their coming to pass: When the Romans were peaceable Governours of Judaea at the publication of these Prophecies, and that there was then no prospect of the Commotions which sometime after happened; when it was the capital Accusation of this very Prophet to the Roman Governour, that he set himself up to be King in opposition to Caesar, by whom that Governour was Commission'd: Can we imagine that *Jesus Christ* who was this Prophet, could possibly be ignorant of the DAY and HOUR when these Predictions should finally be compleated? Ought we not rather to think that all that he meant by that Expression was, that that was not a proper time for him

him to reveal the particular minute when that great event should happen, especially since he had taken care to shew them the time when they ought to provide for their own safety, and had assured them that the final Destruction from which they were advised to make their escape, *was at hand, and even at the Doors.*

III. The obscurity of this Expression of *the Sons not knowing the Day and Hour*, might appear very singular, and very difficult to be accounted for, if this were the only passage in the Evangelists, in which our Lord express'd himself in a doubtful or mystical manner. I have already shewn that in his last discourse with his eleven Disciples just before he went into the Garden, most part of what he said was Figurative and Allegorical, and that they frequently interrupted him, as desiring to be farther informed, till at last he told them that *he came from God*, and would *return to him again*, to which he added that he would hereafter *no more speak to them in Proverbs*. The same method he constantly follow'd in his other Discourses, when he was urged to make such as he then thought improper Manifestations of himself.

Soon after he began his Ministry, *John* ii. at the first Passover, which happen'd after he entred upon his Office, he turned the buyers and sellers and Money-changers out of the Temple, and gave this reason why he did so, that they should not *make his Father's house, a House of Merchandize*, *ψ. 16.* who his Father was they knew not, nor did he tell them. And when the *Jews* asked him thereupon *what Sign* of his being a Prophet he could *shew that he did those things?* *ψ. 18.* He answered them in so ambiguous a manner that none of his Auditors understood him. *Destroy that Temple* said he, *and in three days I will raise it up*, *ψ. 19.* How little they understood what he meant by this which he called a SIGN, appears by their next Question, *forty and six Years*

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Years was this Temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? v. 20. The Disciples understood this as little as the People, nor did he then explain it to them. It was not till after his Resurrection that his Disciples *remembred that he had said this unto them*; and then they perceived that *he spake this of the Temple of his Body, v. 21. 22.* And we find afterwards that our Lord's Accusers at his Tryal brought this Expression of his as an Evidence against him, that he intended to destroy the material Temple, and abolish the whole Jewish Ceremony.

John iii. Nicodemus came to Jesus; he was a Ruler among the Jews, a Pharisee, and one eminently learned in the Law. He told our Lord that he was sure he came from God, because *no Man could do the things that he did, unless God was with him*: Our Lord gave no satisfactory Answer to this; he said indeed, that *unless a Man was born from above, he could not see the Kingdom of God.* How, says Nicodemus, *can a Man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his Mothers Womb, and be born?* This shews that he desired a more explicative Answer, and yet all that our Saviour reply'd was only this, *That unless a Man were born of Water and of the Spirit, he could not enter into the Kingdom of God.* Nicodemus knew full well from the receiv'd Doctrine of the Scribes and Pharisees, what being *born of Water* meant. He knew that Baptism was the constant Ceremony of Initiation of the Profelytes of any Teacher among them, and consequently he understood by these words that *Jesus Christ* intended to shew that his Disciples must be baptized with Water, before they could enter into his Kingdom. Farther he understood not, and as to the Nature or Place of his KINGDOM, those he was wholly a stranger to; and yet more so (it is possible) to the *Birth of the Spirit*. He answers therefore with admiration, *How can these things be? v. 9.* Still our Saviour did not clearly

clearly satisfy him. He directed him to believe that he was come from Heaven to bring Salvation into the World; and that *because he spoke what he knew, and testify'd what he had seen*; and then said, *that as Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever would believe in him, should not perish, but have ETERNAL LIFE, &c. II, 14, 15.* This was all he said, the *lifting up of the Son of Man* was wholly a Mystery to this Rabbi; it was designed so to be; that was not a fit time to MAKE IT KNOWN: It was enough for him then, if he believed: He should, if he would but believe on, as he had done already, that JESUS was a Teacher sent from God, know time enough who they *were that were lost*, and know this great Prophet came *to seek and to save* them.

Before I proceed to other Discourses of our Saviour, I would observe that these words of his, Mystical as they then were, however they appear otherwise to us now, did so far satisfy *Nicodemus*, that he afterwards appeared in Vindication of our Lord at a Meeting of the High Priests and Pharisees, *John* vii. when it was by no means safe to appear openly in his defence; and at last when his Body was taken down from the Cross, when it was yet more dangerous to shew him any Honour, *Nicodemus* brought a costly and princely present of one hundred pound weight of Myrrhe and Aloes to embalm the Body with before its Interment, thereby fulfilling along with *Joseph of Arimathea* that illustrious Prophecy of *Isaiah's*, that he should *make his Grave with the rich at his Death*, *Isai. liii. 9.* but this onely by the way. I go on.

John iv. our Lord discoursed with the Samaritan Woman at *Jacobs Well*. He talk'd more plainly to her than he seems to have done to the Jews in the former Passover at *Jerusalem*: For he told her in direct words that *he was the Christ*, &c. 26. and yet

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even then he spoke figuratively to her, when speaking of *the Water of the Well* that was before them, he said, *Whosoever drinketh of this Water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the Water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the Water that I shall give him, shall be in him a Well of Water springing up into Everlasting Life, v. 13. 14.* Which answer the poor Woman did not in the least understand, when she reply'd, *Sir give me this Water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw, v. 15.*

John vi. our Lord fed about five thousand Persons besides Women and Children, with five Barly Loaves and two small Fishes, and there were twelve Baskets full of Fragments gathered up after they had eaten and were filled. The People hereupon were very desirous to follow him, and he taking occasion from this Miracle that he had lately wrought, told them that *his Flesh was Meat indeed, and his Blood was Drink indeed, v. 58.* and that unless they should eat *his Flesh, and drink his Blood, they should have no Life in them, v. 53.* and this in Contradistinction to the *Manna which their Fathers did eat in the Wilderness, and were dead, v. 58.* this we are told shock'd many of his Disciples, so that they *went back and walked no more with him, v. 66.*

John vii. we have an account of our Lords going up to *Jerusalem* at the Feast of Tabernacles. He went up about the middle of the Feast, which lasted eight Days. Upon the eighth day, they poured out Water in the Court of the Temple before the Altar, as they had done the other seven days before. This tho' not commanded in the Law of *Moses*, yet being in itself innocent, and understood by the learned Men of that time to be Typical of the Effusion of the Holy Spirit, which they firmly expected, tho' they knew not when, or how that Effusion should be, was not disapproved by our Saviour, when he alluded to that Custom of pouring Water upon the
Ground

Ground in the Sanctuary which is described in the *Misna* (*Succoth. iv. 8.*) On the contrary he takes occasion from hence to teach the People in his allegorical way. *In the last day, that great day of the Feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any Man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his Belly shall flow Rivers of living Water, v. 37, 38.* This the Evangelist tells us was not then understood, since they did not know that the Holy Ghost should proceed from him. *For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not glorify'd, v. 39.*

John viii. he goes on in the same mystical manner: He declared indeed *that he came from God, v. 42.* and that *those that kept his saying should never see Death, v. 51.* But this they could not understand, for want of being instructed in the nature of the Redemption which he was about to work, or of the nature and place of the Kingdom into which he designed to bring them: He said, *He was the light of the World and that those that followed him should not walk in Darkness, v. 12.* That he would go his way, and they should seek him, and should dye in their Sins, because *whither he went they could not come, v. 21.* This confounded them; what, said the Jews, *will he kill himself, because he saith, whither I go ye cannot come? v. 22.* And whereupon when they asked him, *who he was?* He would not answer them openly, but only said, *that he was the same that spake to them from the beginning, v. 25.* And tho' he over and over told them, that he came from the Father, and they might have plainly enough perceived (as indeed many of them often did) that by the *Father* he understood the *supreme God*, whom they all worship'd, yet as they did not sufficiently comprehend who he was, so he would not speak more plainly to them. *They understood not that he spake to them of the Father, v. 27.* And what he said immediately after, was

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still darker, *when ye have lift up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am he,* *ŷ. 28.* This none of them, not even the Disciples themselves interpreted of his Crucifixion, and that was not the Hour for him to say more.

John ix. He cured the Man that was born blind; the Reason he gave for doing so was, *Because he must work the works of him that sent him, whilst it was day; for the night was coming, when no Man could work,* *ŷ. 4.* this we now easily understand to be meant of our Lords doing what good he could whilst he was upon Earth, before he suffered; but the Disciples could make little of it, and it may very well be reckoned among the rest of his dark sayings, that the Spirit brought to their Remembrance after his Ascension.

John x. the *Allegory* or *Parable* of the *Sheepfold*, the *Thieves and Robbers*, and the *Porter*, is declared to be such by *St. John, ŷ. 6.* and the *Pharisees* understood it not: And when he told them afterwards that he was the *door of the Sheep, ŷ. 7, 9.* and the *good Shepherd, ŷ. 11, 14.* and that he intended to *lay down his Life for the Sheep, ŷ. 11.* and that he had *power to lay down his life, which no Man could take from him, and power to take it again, ŷ. 18.* and that he had other *Sheep which were not of that Fold, which he was to bring in, that they might hear his voice, that there might be one Flock and one Shepherd, ŷ. 16.* these expressions were all sufficiently mysterious to them, and this accordingly occasioned a *division among them.* So that when some believed on him, because he had *opened the Eyes of the blind,* and by such their Faith had made him the only return that he desired for that glorious Miracle, others said, *he had a Devil and was mad, ŷ. 19, 20, 21.* He did indeed afterwards (when some of his hearers were uneasy at the suspense in which he held them, and desired him to *tell them plainly whether he was the Christ, ŷ. 24.*) say, that
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an Argument of his Divinity. 29

he and his Father were one, *ψ. 30.* but this had so little effect upon them, that they look'd upon him as a Blasphemer, and took up Stones to throw at him, as the Law required where Men were legally convicted of that Crime, *ψ. 31.*

John xi. *Lazarus* is raised from the Dead. By the History of that astonishing Miracle it is manifest, that when he told *Martha* in plain words that he was the Resurrection and the Life, *ψ. 25.* she did not understand him, but told him that the *body stank*, when he bad them take away the stone that lay over *Lazarus's* Grave, *ψ. 39.* Now tho' this must not be reckon'd among his dark sayings, since he instantly explained it by affirming that *he that believed in him, tho' he were dead, should yet live; and that whosoever lived and believed in him should never die, ψ. 25, 26.* yet it was all mysterious to her, because she knew not the NATURE or the PLACE of his KINGDOM, and that was not the time to add more.

John xii. the Passion of our Lord was at hand: *The hour was come when the Son of Man should be glorify'd, ψ. 23.* *The judgment of this World was now.* *Now should the Prince of this World be cast out.* *And if he were lifted up from the Earth, he should draw all Men to him, ψ. 31, 32.* He uses his old Metaphor, which they as little understood, as others did before. And when they desired him to explain it, he pursued his dark way of speaking, involving his discourse under the Allegories of *Light* and *Darkness.*

I have chosen these Instances of our blessed Saviours method of declaring the things that immediately concerned himself both to his Disciples and to the People, out of *St. John's* Gospel, because that Evangelist wrote many Years after the other three had published theirs, and supplied what was wanting in the rest, concerning his NATURE, the design of his coming, his business here, and his method of revealing his Doctrine and his Mission till the very hour
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of his suffering. We find many Passages of a like nature in the others, so that we need not wonder so much, if in a Prophecy which foretold the final Destruction of the *Jewish* Government, the ruin of the Temple and capital City, and the perpetual Dissipation of that whole Nation, he did not speak so plainly as either his Disciples could have wished for, or we at this distance might desire.

IV. As mysterious and obscure as this conduct of our blessed Lord may appear to us now, yet it will not be difficult to discern when he designed to conceal himself, and when he did not. His forerunner *John* the Baptist opened his Ministry with Preaching Repentance to the *Jews*, because the *Kingdom of Heaven* (i.e. the *Kingdom of the Messiah*) was at hand. He always declared that he was not *that Prophet* whom the People then expected. *He wrought no Miracles*, but told his hearers that *one should come after him, the latchet of whose Shoes he was not worthy to unloose*. And when he saw *Jesus* walking by, he said to those that were present, *Behold the Lamb of God*. All that *John* the Baptist said was plain and open, and the nature of his Commission required it should be so. When he had done what he was sent to do, he fell into *Herod's* hands, whom he had rebuked for his unlawful Commerce with *Herodias* his Brother *Philip's* Wife, and so was taken off. His Commission then expired with his Death, if not before, when he was cast into Prison; and those whom he had baptized into the expectation of a *Messiah* that just then appeared, were thereby prepared to receive him when they should know who he was.

When our Lord entred upon his Ministry, as his Commission was of a different Nature, so he executed it in a different manner. He began with working Miracles, which all tended as well to the benefit of Mankind, as to the Demonstration of his Power; when by the Miracles which

he wrought, the People were prepared diligently to attend to, and to receive his Doctrine, he taught them sometimes by *Parables*, and sometimes without. In *his Sermon upon the Mount*, which seems to have been preach'd very soon after his entry upon his Office, he opened his Commission, and by speaking in a commanding style, as well as by the things themselves which he spoke, the People plainly saw that *he taught them as one who had Authority, and not as the Scribes*. He enlarged upon the blessedness which he came to reveal, and upon the Qualifications of those that were to enjoy it. He explained the moral Duties of the Decalogue. He compared his own commands with those given before to *Moses*. He shewed wherein the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, how strict soever it might seem to be, was deficient. He required his Disciples to be ready to pass by Injuries, and to forgive those that wronged them. He described the method of giving Alms with advantage to themselves. How they should pray, and what Dispositions of mind were requisite to cause their Prayers to be heard. How they should fast, what little reason they had to be over-solicitous about their condition in this World. He condemns rash Judging and Censuring of the Actions of other Men, directing them first to look at home: And at last exhorted them to a strict observation of his Laws by assuring them that that was the only way by which they could hope to enter into his Kingdom. In all these particulars he was plain and explicit, nothing Ambiguous, nothing Mystical or Ænigmatical appears in all that he said. And as he did not design to conceal his meaning in any matters of a Moral Nature, but always spoke as became a Preacher of Righteousness, so it is evident by the Reflection, which his Hearers made upon his Doctrine and the manner in which he delivered it, that he was not misunderstood.

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At other times, when he spoke upon other subjects, he taught the People in Parables; and this he purposely did, *because* (as he told his Disciples when they asked him why he taught the People in that manner) *they seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand*, Mat. xiii. 10, 13. when any of them shew'd a Curiosity to know who he was, and what was the extent of his Authority, and to be apprized of the ultimate design of his coming, he generally concealed himself. He bade them still look back to the works that he wrought, and they would satisfy them, as they had already satisfied *Nicodemus*, that he came from God, and that God was his Father. And therefore he still commanded them to *believe in him*, intimating thereby that that was enough for them as yet to do. That was the universal and indeed the sole Injunction which he laid upon those upon whom or for whose sake he wrought any Miracles. And be they who they would, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, that apply'd to him (as appears by the Case of the *Syrophoenician* Woman, and the *Centurion* for whom *even the Jews* interceded, because *he loved their Nation, and had built them a Synagogue*) and implored his Assistance, if they declared their Belief in him, as in a Person sent from God, he desired no more, and never sent them away without relief. But, as that was not the time for him to declare the utmost extent of his Power and Authority, and much less the Nature of his Kingdom which he (and *John Baptist* before him) signified to be just at hand, to shew them how he designed to redeem Mankind, or to manifest his Divinity in plain and explicit Words; so when any subject led him to discourse upon those Heads, tho' he said enough to engage an humble and tractable Soul, to put an entire Confidence in him and in all he said, yet he wrapt them up for the most part in Mysterious and Allegorical Expressions. These, tho' not then understood,

stood, yet after the effusion of the Holy Spirit were clearly comprehended not only by his Disciples, but by the obedient and humble part of those to whom they preach'd.

V. The particular Reasons why our Lord acted in this manner, are not at all difficult to be understood by us now. In the Text before us, we may upon enquiry satisfy ourselves that he in Mercy concealed the DAY AND HOUR from his Disciples, whether they be understood of the *Destruction of Jerusalem* or of the *Day of Judgment*.

If we interpret these Words of the *Destruction of Jerusalem*, we shall easily see that if they had known, and afterwards divulged them (as in the nature of things they would unavoidably have done) they would as unavoidably have exposed themselves to the rage and fury of the Zealots of all Sects, who crucify'd our Lord first, and afterwards stoned St. *Stephen* for speaking, what they called, blasphemous words against *Moses*, and against God. Now it was against our Lords design, in any thing that he said, unnecessarily to provoke the *Jews*, till the Gospel had gotten sufficient root throughout the whole *Roman Empire* (ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ οἰκουμένη. *Matt.* xxiv. 14.) For that Reason the Apostles (St. *Paul* especially) became all things to all Men, that by any means they might save some. That Apostle of the *Gentiles*, who had been bred a *Pharisee*, was at charges with four Disciples, who had taken upon them the *Nazarite's Vow*, that all might know that he himself walked orderly and kept the *Law*, *Acts* xxi. 24. He had circumcised *Timothy* before, because his Mother was a *Jewess*, *Acts* xvi. 3. In short the whole *Mosaic Oeconomy* was preserved by Christians of *Jewish* Extraction, as well as by the *Jews* who would not believe in *Christ*, who lived at *Jerusalem*, till the *Abomination of Desolation* was set up in the Holy Place, which was foretold as a signal for the Christians to withdraw. When once they saw that, they knew the time was come; to have

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told them when it should come to pass before it did, might probably have in some measure defeated the designs of Providence. For it was then determined to put a final end to the appearance as well as to the validity of the whole Levitical Dispensation, and to punish in the most terrible and wasting manner that execrable Generation, who when they crucified the Lord of Glory, desired that his *Blood might be upon them and upon their Children*. It might also have been an Instruction possibly to the People to have submitted to the *Romans*, and by that means they might have repress'd the fury of the *Zealots*. That perhaps might have put a stop to the motions of *Titus*, and thereby have prevented the ruin then falling upon them, and then, that which was *determined would not have been poured upon the Desolate* contrary to the express Prediction of the Prophet *Daniel*. Our Lord therefore told his Disciples that that **DAY** and **HOURL** was not **THEN** to be **MADE KNOWN**, tho' he gave them what in Mercy he judged to be sufficient, namely the *signs of the end of that Age* (τὰ σημεῖα τῆς αἰῶνος, *Matt. xxiv. 3.*) i. e. of that time when all these things should be fulfilled. Now when they should see all these Signs wonderfully fulfilled, even with over-measure, they would have then, as all future Ages have since had, certain Evidence and undeniable Demonstration that he was sent from God. He said enough to put them, and all considering Men upon their guard; fuller and more particular Indications of the time were then by no means proper; for tho' they might possibly have been able to bear his words, yet others might have made an ill use of them contrary to his original Intention.

Suppose now on the other hand, that this **DAY** and **HOURL** were ultimately meant of the *Day of Judgment*. The Revelation of that precise time so soon might have had a very ill effect upon the Disciples, and by their means upon the first Christians:
Instead

Instead of *sitting* (as the Mother of Zebedees Children desired for her Sons) *one at his right hand, and the other at his left hand in his Kingdom*, they would soon have perceived, that the *promised reward* was a great way off. The *Scoffers* in St. Peter's days, upbraided the faithful with asking, *Where is the Promise of his coming? For since the Fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation*, 2 Pet. iii. 4. To whom he makes this just Answer, *One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance*, &c. 8. 9. If the faithful were attacked in that so early time, when the DAY and HOUR were kept in suspense, how greatly would they have been staggered, if our Lord had been particular about them in this Prophecy? It is now near one thousand seven hundred Years since this Prophecy was made; and who knows how many Ages yet to come this Earth may last? We are now by a long series of Events, through so many successive Generations instructed NOT to attend to *times and seasons* that are unrevealed, and each Man is directed always to have in view *what manner of person he ought to be in all Conversation and Godliness*; as firmly believing that if he does so, he shall in God's good time *reap the fruit of his Labours*. This secret therefore of the long duration of this World, was studiously concealed from the first Christians; and they were exhorted incessantly *to watch and to pray*, as not knowing but the *end of all things might be at hand*. Nay it may be justly questioned whether the precise time of the *Day of Judgment* was revealed here to any of the Apostles, except perhaps to St. John. Here was certainly no necessity of their being taught it. And even his *Revelation* is wrapt up in such dark and allegorical Representations,

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sentations, that tho' with other learned and excellent Men, I am fully persuaded, that he was therein directed from above to foretel the several States of the Church of Christ till the *Day of Judgment*; yet it does not seem to me to have been intended to be perfectly understood, till all should be entirely fulfilled: For then the *Glory of God* will be set forth by these invincible Demonstrations of his *Wisdom, Power, Justice, Mercy and Goodness*. It is enough for us that are here below in a state of Probation, if we can see these things *as in a glass darkly*; it will be time enough at last, to see them all clearly, as we see one another now *face to face*.

Pass we on now to some of those things which our Lord spake very mystically, not to the People only, but even in a great measure to his Disciples. His design of coming down from the Father, as he told the *Jews*, was to seek and to save those that were lost. The design he resolved to execute, by offering up of himself as a full, perfect, and sufficient Oblation and Satisfaction to God for the Sins of Mankind. That offering in which he was to be slain, was to be made by wicked and execrable Men: Had he revealed himself and all that he was to do, this design (if the People had believed it, and his works might have easily led them to have believed it) tho' it might not have been liable to have been prevented, yet it might have met with such Impediments as would have been utterly inconsistent with the end of his coming: whilst they all believed that his KINGDOM was of this WORLD; the incredulous *Jews* had a pretence to lay hold upon him, as an Enemy both to *Caesar* and the Law. Thereby they effectually fulfilled the Decree of the Father for the Salvation of Mankind. And tho' St. *Peter* more than once confessed that *Jesus Christ* was the *Son of God*, yet it is certain from the Evangelical History, that neither he, nor any of the rest of the Apostles, did then know our
Lord

Lord to be what he really was. This was the main Article, which they not only could not then bear, but which was by no means proper to be then clearly revealed. He *hinted* indeed often at what he was, but then his words were only *hints*, and such *hints* too as were not fully understood. He told the People that *he and the Father were one*, but that *as the Father sent him, and he was sent by the Father, so his Father was greater than he.*

That the *Jewish Church* had at that time Ideas of a *plurality of Persons in the divine Nature*, may be demonstrably proved from the *Chaldee Paraphrases*, the Writings of *Philo Judaeus*, and the ancientest *Jewish Cabbalists*, as has been not many Years ago put beyond dispute to those who are in any measure competent Judges of this Question, by the late incomparable Dr. *Allix* in his *Judgment of the ancient Jewish Church against the Unitarians*; and from the curious extracts out of the *Sepher Zoar* (the Text of the ancient *Jewish Cabbala*) newly published in *Holland* by *Monfr. Norrelius*, an ingenious *Swede*, we see that the *Jews* had a notion of something very like a *Trinity of Persons in the Godhead*, and of a *Metatron* or *Mediator* between God and us. But how far these things were commonly understood by the People we know not. It is very likely that none but the *Masters of Israel* knew much of these matters: We may be pretty confident that they were not in the least apply'd to our blessed Lord, nor indeed was it then convenient that they should; those that would believe in him had enough to rest upon, because his works spoke loudly for him, and shewed from whence he came. They had such rules given them for the direction of their Conduct, as he expected should be obey'd by those that would profess themselves to be his Disciples: Thus they were told what they were to do, and in whom to believe; if they took him to be the Saviour of the World, that was sufficient.

But

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But then they were directed by all that he did and said, to look up to the *Father* as the *sender*, and *him* as the *Person sent*; and still to give the *Father* the *Glory* in all that they should see the *Son* at any time do; if they thought him superior to *Moses*, who was no more than a *Servant*, *tho' faithful in all his House*, whilst he executed the commands of his *great Master*, whereas our *LORD* was his *Son*, to whom he communicated his whole *Will*, they did as much as was then required of them to do; farther Manifestations of himself would not have suited with that state of *Humiliation*, in which he appeared before his *Passion*. This concealment of himself till his *Resurrection*, is what the ancient *Fathers* meant by the word *Oeconomy*, when apply'd to this subject. We have one remarkable instance of this Concealment, in the *Disciples* disbelief of the *Resurrection* of our *Lord*, for some time after it had been declared to them by very competent *Witnesses* that he was actually risen: For tho' he had plainly told them more than once before, that he should be crucify'd, and should rise again the third day; yet the first *Intelligence* of his *Resurrection*, which they had from the *Women* who had it from the *Angels*, was received by them with scorn and contempt (*Luke xxiv. 1 — 11.*) Their continued *Ignorance* of this whole matter to the very last, however they might, and did afterwards call even things that they had seen and heard before to mind, prevented their divulging what they at any time heard, where it ought not to be disclosed; by which means the work of our *Salvation* was carryed on by our *Lord*, much more easily in the way in which he designed it should. He chose to reside among us so long, that both in *Judaea* and *Galilee* the *People* had time enough to hear his *Doctrine*, and to see his *Miracles* more than once; and till the *Hour* in which he actually suffered was come, he always withdrew from the *People* when they offered

ferred to take him, and never made any publick Declarations of himself that might defeat his purpose.

And thus indeed our Saviour's Averrment of his *Ignorance of the Day and Hour*, may be truly enough understood of his *Mediatorial state* in which the *WORD* was joined to, or as *St. John* speaks, *was made Flesh*: For in no other Capacity he could in any sense be thought to be *ignorant* of any thing. He always directed his Disciples to give Glory to God, and to leave hidden things to him, because it was not for them to know the times and seasons which he had reserved to himself.

I have finished what I at first proposed to my self to do; I have explained this famous Text in such a manner, as I apprehend to be suitable to the method which *Jesus Christ* constantly follow'd, in cases wherein he did not think it proper to speak out more clearly. I would only now make some few Observations upon the whole, before I dismiss the Argument.

I. In the first place now, I expect to be told that, since the most considerable of the Fathers, especially of the *Greeks* (such as *St. Athanasius*, *St. Basil*, *St. Gregory Nazianzen*, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, and others) interpret this Passage of *Jesus Christ*, considered in his humane Nature, I ought not to reject their Authority. If some few modern Interpreters have run counter to such Men as these, who had study'd this Controversy with the utmost care, at a time when these Points were as warmly debated as ever they have been since, it is more likely that these new Men should be mistaken than those great and good Fathers who lived so long ago, and it is not reasonable that their Authority should give way to such a novel Opinion. Those Gentlemen with whom I have to do, will (I know very well) not make this Objection: But tho' they will possibly be better pleased with a new Interpretation, than with an old

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one,

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one, yet others may perhaps be shock'd at what they imagine goes against the current of the ancientest and the most venerable Interpreters. To these Men I shall offer the Determination of St. *Augustine* upon this very Passage. He was a Man of uncommon Sagacity, and one that had study'd the Scriptures with great Care and Diligence: His words are these,
 * " He is ignorant of that which he will not suffer
 " others to know, *i.e.* which he did not know so as
 " to tell his Disciples at that time. Thus it was said
 " to *Abraham*, now I know that thou fearest God,
 " Gen. xxii. 12. *i.e.* now I have made thee to know
 " it. For *Abraham* being try'd by that Temptation
 " became thereby known to himself: For those
 " things he intended to tell his Disciples, at a
 " convenient time, which tho' they were yet to
 " come, he spake of as if they were past, when he
 " said thus, *Henceforth I call you not Servants, for the*
 " *Servant knoweth not what his Lord doth; but I have*
 " *called you Friends, for all things that I have heard*
 " *of my Father, I have made known unto you,* John

XV.

* Hoc nescit quod nescientes facit, id est, quod non ita sciebat ut tunc Discipulis indicaret: Sicut dictum est ad *Abraham*, *Nunc cognovi quod timeas Deum*, id est, nunc feci ut cognosceres; quia et ipse sibi in illâ tentatione probatus innotuit. Nam & illud utique dicturus erat Discipulis tempore opportuno, de quo futuro tamquam praeterito loquens, ait, *Jam non dicam vos servos, sed amicos. Servus enim nescit voluntatem domini sui: Vos autem dixi amicos, quia omnia quaecunque audi-vi à Patre, nota vobis feci.* Quod nondum fecerat, sed quia certò facturus erat, quasi jam fecisset locutus est. Ipsius enim ait, *Multa habeo vobis dicere, sed non potestis illa portare modò, inter quae intelligitur & de Die & Hora.* Nam et Apostolus, *neque enim judicavi me*, inquit, *scire aliquid in vobis nisi Christum Jesum, & hunc Crucifixum.* Eis enim loquebatur, qui capere altiora de Christi Deitate non poterant. Quibus etiam paullo post dicit, *Non potui vobis loqui quasi Spiritualibus, sed quasi Carnalibus.* Hoc ergo inter illos nesciebat, quod per illum scire non poterant. Et hoc solum se scire dicebat, quod eos per

xv. 15. He spoke of what he had not yet done, as if he had done it already, because he certainly intended to do it; for he told them *that he had yet many things to say unto them, but they could not bear them now*, John xvi. 12. among which this of the *Day and Hour* ought to be reckoned; so also the Apostle, *I determin'd not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him Crucified*, 1 Cor. ii. 2. for he spoke to those who could not receive the higher things [which related to] the Divinity of the Son of God; and therefore a little after he said, *I COULD not speak unto you as unto Spiritual, but as unto Carnal*, 1 Cor. iii. 1. That therefore he did not know among them, which they could not know from him; and that only he said, he knew which they ought [hereafter]

per illum scire oportebat. Denique sciebat inter perfectos quod inter parvulos nesciebat. Ibi quippe ait sapientiam loquimur inter perfectos. Eo namque genere Locutionis nescire quisque dicitur quod occultat, quo dicitur fossa caeca quae occulta est. Neque enim aliquo genere loquuntur SCRIPTURAE, quod in consuetudine humanâ non inveniat; quia utique HOMINIBUS LOQUUNTUR. *Augustin. de Trinitate Lib. 1. cap. 23. Edit. Benedictin. Tom. viii. p. 541. Antwerp. 1700.*

Θέλων ὁ Κύριος κωλύσαι τὴν μαθητὰς ἀπὸ τῶν ἐρωτῶν περὶ τῶν ἡμερῶν ἐλπίσιν καὶ τῶν ὥρων, φησὶν ὅτι ἔδὲ οἱ Ἄγγελοι, ἔδὲ ὁ υἱὸς οἶδεν. Εἰ γὰρ εἶπεν ὅτι οἶδα ἡμεῖς, καὶ θέλω ὑμῖν ἀποκαλύψαι, ἐλίπυσεν ἂν αὐτοὺς. Νυνὶ ὁ Σοφώτερον μεταχειρίζεται, καὶ ἀπέργη αὐτοὺς ὅλως τὴν ζητῆσιν μαθεῖν καὶ ἐνοχλεῖν αὐτῶν, ἐν τῷ εἰπεῖν ὅτι, ἔτε οἱ Ἄγγελοι, ἔτε ἐγὼ οἶδα· ἀπὸ τῆς ἀδελφείας τινὸς, νοήσεις τὸ λεγόμενον· πολλὰ καὶ παιδία μικρὰ βλέπεις τὴν παλιέρας αὐτῶν κερταίνεις τὴν ἐν ταῖς χερσὶ, καὶ ζητῶσι τὰ τοιαῦτα. οἱ δὲ παλιέρες, καὶ βέλονται δὲναί τὰ καὶ, κλαυθμυρίζοντες ὡς καὶ λαμβάνοντες. τελευτῶντες μὲν οἱ παλιέρες κρύπτειν ἐκείνο ὁ κερταίνοντες καὶ ἐπιδεικνύντες τὰς χεῖρας κενὰς τοῖς παιδίοις, ἰσῶσιν αὐτὰ καὶ κλαυθμῶν. Οὕτω καὶ ὁ Κύριος, ὡς παιδίοις πῶς Ἀποστόλοις προσφύγων, ἀπέκρυψε τὴν ἡμέραν. εἰ γὰρ εἶπεν ὅτι, οἶδα. καὶ λέγω ὑμῖν, ὡς ἡμεῖς ἂν ὡς καὶ αὐτὰ μαθητὸν. ὅτι ὁ γινώσκων ὁ Κύριος τὴν ἡμέραν καὶ τὴν ὥραν, προσέθηκεν. αὐτὸς γὰρ τὴν αἰῶνα ἐποίησεν. ὁ δὲ ἐποίησε πῶς καὶ γινώσκων; ἀλλὰ ὁ Συμφερόντως ἀπέκρυψε ὁ Θεὸς τὴν Σωτήριαν τῶν βίβων, εἴτε τὴν καθολικῶν. εἴτε τὴν ἐνὸς ἐκάστου. ἵνα ὡς ἀδελφοὶ οἱ τῶν τέλων, ἀνὰ ἀγωνιζώμεθα προσδοκῶντες αὐτὸ καὶ φοβούμενοι μὴ ἐπιτοίμοις ἐπιτεῖν. Theophylact. Comm. in Marc. xiii. p. 267, 268.

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“ to know by his means. In short, he knew that
 “ among those that were full grown [Men,] which
 “ he did not know among those that were *Babes* [in
 “ *Christ.*] For there he says, *We speak the Wisdom*
 “ *of God,* 1 Cor. ii. 7. *among those that are perfect,*
 “ y. 6. and by the same way of speaking, every Man
 “ is said not to know what he conceals, that a Ditch
 “ is said to be blind which is not in sight: For in
 “ the Scriptures no way of speaking is made use of,
 “ but what may be found in common Life, because
 “ the Scriptures speak to Men.

This is an excellent Interpretation of the Passage before us, and fully illustrates what I have advanced already out of the received and known ways of speaking in the *Hebrew* Language, and as fully justifies those excellent Men who have gone before me.

II. This Exposition of this Text, St. *Austin* was very fond of, he used it in several other places in his Works; and besides the Passages of SS. already quoted; he illustrated it by these words of God to *Moses*, Deut. xiii. 3. *Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that Prophet or that Dreamer of Dreams: For the LORD your God proveth you, to KNOW whether you love the LORD your God, with all your Heart and with all your Soul: i. e.* I will suffer these Sorcerers and these Dreamers to tempt you, that when you shall at any time withstand their Insinuations, you may by experience KNOW that you truly love the Lord our God. Whether St. *Austin*, who was an *African*, had any skill in the old *Punic*, which was a Dialect of the ancient *Phoenician* or *Hebrew* Language, and which was not in all probability wholly lost in that Country in his time, I dare not say: If he had any skill in that Tongue, he would soon see how easily to know and to make known might be put for one another. This then is not to be leaned upon; his great understanding and constant Meditation upon the style of the Scriptures, led him to find out the Truth;
 and

and what I have said already, will, I hope, convince unprejudiced Readers that his Explication of our blessed Saviours Ignorance of this DAY and HOUR may be safely depended upon.

Bellarmin and his Advocate *Gretser*, who had ends of their own to serve by it, made use of *St. Austin's* Authority to prove that *Jesus Christ as Man knew the last DAY and HOUR*. This *St. Austin* does not say, how our Lord knew them he leaves undetermined, and solves the whole another way perfectly analogous to several Declarations which God had already made concerning himself in his Word; tho' it seems evident to me, that *St. Austin* did not attribute that Power to *Jesus Christ* considered only as a Man. This great Father was the standing Oracle of the Western Church, for many Ages after his own time, so that it was no wonder that these two very learned Jesuits were willing to shelter themselves under his venerable name. But this Explication of theirs did not pass without Contradiction: *Dr. John Forbes*, sometime Professor of Divinity in the University of *Aberdeen* in the last Century, and the Glory of the Episcopal Church of *Scotland* whilst he lived, and who was turned out of his place, and suffered Banishment for adhering to it and to its Doctrines, was very angry with these Jesuits, and openly opposed *St. Austin's* Doctrine in this particular as Erroneous. This truly good and learned Man was apprehensive least his Explication of this so much controverted Text, should open a way to Equivocation and Falshood, and be a means of destroying Faith and mutual Credit among Men; He therefore set himself purposely to confute in his *Instructiones Historico-Theologicae* (lib. ii. cap. 20.) and upon that occasion inveighed against that Doctrine in general, with great warmth. He seems to me not to have enough considered the method of our Lords revealing himself whilst he was upon Earth; nor to have sufficiently attended to se-

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veral of his Speeches to his Disciples, as well as to the rest of the *Jews*, in which he concealed himself and his meaning every whit, as much as he has done in this particular case.

*Matt. xv. A woman of Canaan (or as St. Mark calls her a Syro-Phoenician Woman) came to Jesus out of the Coast of Tyre and Sidon, to desire him to heal her Daughter who was grievously vexed with a Devil, §. 22. to her first cry our Lord made no answer, and when his Disciples desired him to send her away, §. 23. he answered in these plain and direct words, I am NOT SENT (ἐκ ἀπεστάλω) but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel, §. 24. When she yet defiled not for what he had now said, he replied farther, It is not meet (ἐκ ἔσι καλὸν) to take the Childrens bread, and to cast it to Dogs, §. 26. No words can express a plainer or a flatter denial than these; our Lord here declared that he was NOT SENT to any but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel: Yet he certainly was sent to seek and to save all, every where, throughout the whole Nations of Mankind, that were or should be lost. Nay he says to himself, *John x. 15, 16.* where he uses the self same Allegory that he does here, *I lay down my life for the sheep; and other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.**

What shall we say to this? *Dr. Forbes's* Distinction of *Knowledge of Apprehension*, and *Knowledge of Approbation*, were it applicable to this place, *i. e.* had our Lord spoken here of his *Knowledge*, not of his *Mission*, yet still that Distinction could not possibly have any place here. The words literally taken will bear but one sense; in that sense this admirable Woman understood them, as appears by her answers, and by our Lords replies. But if we interpret them as *Dr. Clark* does very well in his Paraphrase upon the place, we shall perfectly comprehend our Saviour's

our's meaning: "*I am NOT NOW sent unto the Gentiles: I am to preach ONLY to the Jews whilst I am here; tho' I am sent in Truth to all Mankind, and intend to lay down my Life for them all; but that is what I do not think proper to reveal fully at this time.*" And accordingly, when her Faith was sufficiently tryed, and was not shaken by those forbidding answers, he healed her Daughter at last.

Shall we affirm now that this answer of our Lords opens a way to Falshood? *God forbid, let God be true and every Man a lyar:* We have seen already when *Jesus Christ* spoke plainly, and when he did not, and why he did both. When he preached Repentance as he did in his *Sermon upon the Mount*, he designed that what he said should be understood according to the fullest sense and import of his words; when he told the People that he was *the Son of God*, that *God sent him*, and that *those that believed in him, should not perish but have everlasting life*, he expected to be implicitly believed, and bad those that should give credence unto his words, rest satisfy'd that he would make all his promises good. At other times we see that he concealed himself, and frequently gave evasive Answers, and did not always intend to be understood. This is as manifest as the Meridian light in the Text now before us. We can now fully explain what our Saviour said in the hearing of his Disciples to that good Creature who applyed her self to him then for relief; but neither she nor his Disciples did then understand him: *St. Peter* (who was in all probability present at that time) certainly did not, not even after he had begun to preach the *Gospel of the Kingdom* to the *Jews* at the great Pentecost. And therefore he was particularly instructed by a Vision from Heaven in the lawfulness of Preaching to those Sheep who were not of that Fold, to which he originally belonged,

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I have dwelt the longer upon this Text in *St. Matthew*, to shew that this Panic with which this truly pious and learned Man (who ought not to be named without reverence) was seized when he found himself urged with *St. Austin's* Explication of our Lords Ignorance of that DAY and HOUR was altogether groundless. There was as great a Concealment in these words of our Lord, which are recorded by *St. Matthew*, as there is in those in *St. Mark*, nay in my opinion a greater, for in the words in *St. Mark*, as *St. Austin* saw long ago, our Lords *not knowing the DAY and HOUR*, might be fairly enough interpreted by *making them known*: Whereas here when *Jesus Christ* said he was NOT SENT to any but *Jews* only, neither the Disciples nor the *Canaanitish* Woman could possibly understand what he meant; they could not conceive that *he was NOT SENT to preach THEN to the Gentiles*, and that their *hour in which they were to be called was not yet come*. And it is very probable that this speech of our Lords which was spoken upon so remarkable an occasion might go a great way to confirm the Apostles first, and the Disciples whom they converted afterwards, in an Opinion that the *Gentiles* were never designed to be partakers of that great Redemption. This is certain that *St. Peter* had a particular Vision sent him to set him right in this matter, and that the Disciples were angry with him for going to *Cornelius*; and that they were not pacified till he had acquainted them with the *heavenly Vision*, to which he was obedient when he went to *Caesarea* upon that errand.

Dr. Forbes had reason to dread that Doctrine of *Equivocation* and *mental Reservation* in cases where Men were examined before a Magistrate, which the Jesuits impudently taught, and was impudently practised in this Nation at that time. By that Doctrine they hoped to shelter themselves and their Disciples whom they had instructed to practise as that directed, when

when they were arraigned for Treasons of the blackest Nature, committed against their native Country and their lawful Sovereigns. The conduct of *F. Garnet*, who suffered for being concern'd in the *Gunpowder Treason*, puts this beyond dispute. And it is plain from what *F. Parsons* writ upon this Argument in his Treatises concerning *Mitigation* against Bishop *Morton* (if I misremember not) that they cover'd themselves by Scriptural Examples in this their practice, and appealed to what our blessed Lord often said to the *Jews* during the course of his Ministry; whereas had they not been *given up to believe a lie*, they would have seen that his example would not have stood them in any stead: For when *Jesus Christ* was examined at his trial before the Council of the *Jews*, or before *Pilate*, he either said nothing or spoke plainly. He set his Disciples a glorious example, whom he commanded *not to be ashamed of HIM or of his WORDS*. And as he there declared plainly who and what he was, so he has required us to confess him before Men, if we expect that he should confess, *i.e.* own us before his Father who is in Heaven. Nothing therefore that looks like a concealment, can be found in his Answers when once *his hour was come*: Before indeed, tho' in setting forth his Commandments, he used plain and direct words, declaring what they to whom he preached *were to do*, if they would inherit eternal life; yet when he was called upon to manifest, and declare the utmost extent of his Commission, he either express'd himself in *Parables* and *Proverbs*, or some other way concealed himself. It might have defeated the great design of his coming, had he explained himself at first more fully; nor could his Disciples have *born to have had the times and seasons which for the good of Mankind the Father reserved in his own Power*, distinctly and plainly revealed to them. But it is time to go on:.

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III. I can willingly allow that the words of *St. Mark*, which have given rise to this whole Discourse are and were when they were first spoken designed to be ambiguous. This would not shock the Disciples then so much as it may possibly us now, when there is no occasion to use any dark Expressions in any matters relating to our Faith which we ought to know; especially in Countries and Ages where Men are not so much used to receive Instructions cloathed in an ambiguous and parabolical dress. The Disciples (tho' otherwise most of them illiterate Men) knew very well that there were very many things as difficult to be understood, and as liable to be misapplyed in the old Prophets as any thing which our blessed Lord ever said. The *Signs* by which *Isaiah*, *Hosea*, *Ezekiel* and *Jeremiah* were directed to instruct the Men of *Judah* and the Men of *Ephraim*, to whom they were sent, had many of them more difficulty, and could as little be literally understood as any thing that our blessed Lord ever said, at least so far as we have any account of his Discourses, either to the People, or to his Disciples in the new Testament; and Instructions delivered in a dark, an ambiguous, a symbolical or a parabolical way, were as we know from the ancientest Writers of the *Jewish* Nation, in great request among the *Jews* in *Jesus Christ's* time; so that our Lord by his frequent use of them, not only concealed what he did not think fit more clearly to reveal, but also accommodated himself to the Genius and Disposition of the Age to which he spoke.

But some perhaps here will ask, will not this lead us into a snare, when we see that *Jesus Christ* a Preacher of Righteousness and of Truth, gave evasive Answers to those that at times consulted him, and such Answers too sometimes as cannot possibly, and in truth ought not to be understood in a literal sense? No; because he gave his Reasons afterwards

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why he spoke in this manner: When the Disciples asked our Lord, *why he spake to the People in Parables?* He answered, *Because to them it was not given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God. For their Heart was waxed gross, their Ears were dull of hearing, and their Eyes they had closed: I speak therefore to them in Parables, lest at any time they should see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and should be converted, and I should heal them,* Matt. xiii. 10, 15. When our Lord was gone up to Heaven, the Comforter explained to the Disciples what they could not bear whilst he was among them; and as they were taught of God so they were instructed to teach others also.

III. This gradual method of revealing himself to Mankind, was not onely pursued by our Lord himself whilst he was upon Earth, but was observed by those whom the Spirit of God inspired to write his History. St. *Matthew* at large acquaints us with his being born of a Virgin, with the danger he was in during his Infancy, and with his being sent from God to preach Salvation to Mankind. He takes great care to apply the Prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the *Messiah* to *Jesus Christ*; and he is very particular in describing many of his Miracles, and in saying that there were great numbers of others, which he only hints at; but we see very little in his Gospel that directly leads us to believe, that *Jesus Christ* was really God; tho' there are some few passages which sufficiently shew that he knew it. For when he applies the Prophecy of EMMA-NUEL (*i. e.* GOD WITH US) in *Isaiah* to our Lord, and when he tells us that *Jesus* KNEW THE THOUGHTS of the People that were angry with him, for telling the Paralytic Man that *his sins were forgiven him* (Matt. ix. 4.) which property of *knowing the Hearts of the Children of Men*, *Solomon* had long before declared to be one of the peculiar Attributes of the most high

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God, *For thou knowest the hearts of the Children of Men*, 2 Chron. vi. 30. he pointed out to the Church what they were to believe upon that head; but then he describes our Lord many times as concealing the Miracles which he wrought. And as his appearance here was entirely in a state of Humiliation, till he was risen from the Dead, so ideas suitable to that state are all along pursued by that Evangelist.

St. Mark had St. Matthew constantly in view, whom he usually abridges. St. Luke is the most particular of them all, in his Description of our Saviours Birth, and of what he did in his Childhood; and tho' he relates very many things which are not in the two foregoing Evangelists, yet they all tend to the same purpose, namely that he was sent from above to preach the Gospel of his Kingdom, with full power to save those that should believe in him, and that after his Resurrection he ascended up to Heaven, after having made an explicate Declaration to his Disciples that *all power was given to him in Heaven and in Earth and that he would be with them to the end of the World*, Matt. xxviii. 18, 20. St. Luke indeed goes farther, and in his *second Treatise*, in which he lets us know what the Apostles did after they had received the Holy Ghost, he tells us how our Lord fulfilled his Promise of his future Presence. How the Apostles after their receiving of the Holy Ghost baptized Converts; bestowed the gifts of the Spirit upon those that were worthy to receive them, founded Churches, and positively declared that there was no other name given under Heaven, by which Men could be saved, but only the name of *Jesus Christ*; this is what we can chiefly gather from these two Books of this Evangelist.

St. John takes an opposite method; he supposes the *Humanity of Christ* to be sufficiently evinced by those that went before him. The *actions of our Lord* are not so largely, nor so variously treated of by

by this BELOVED DISCIPLE as his *Discourses*; and those *Discourses* too were chiefly concerning himself, and the *actions* recorded are chiefly brought in to introduce those *Discourses*. Tho' he gives an Account of some of the Miracles of our Lord, yet they are but few in comparison to those we meet with in the former Evangelists. Those too were of a public nature, wrought in public places, and such as would naturally lead both the Spectators, and the Persons on whom they were wrought, to believe, that he was not barely a great Prophet, but a Divine Person sent from God. His first publick Miracle at the Wedding at *Cana in Galilee*, where he made Water Wine, was very likely to draw the Attention of the *Holy Family*, and of his old Acquaintance. The Man that lay at the *Pool of Bethesda*, who had been a *Cripple* for eight and thirty Years, was cured on the Sabbath day, and was commanded to shew the thorough goodness of his Cure, by carrying away his Bed, in *direct opposition* to all the Sabbath Laws both Written and Traditional, then in force, and Superstitiously observed among them; and this too was done at *Jerusalem* at one of the *Chagigah's* or *publick Feasts*. At another *publick Feast* he cured a Man that was born blind. From these Miracles, as also from another in *John vi.* when he fed five thousand Persons with five Barley Loaves and two small Fishes, he took occasion to speak so much concerning himself to the People, as might leave them without excuse if they did not believe him to be the *Son of God*. And the noblest Miracle that he ever wrought (taking it in all its circumstances) before he voluntarily laid down his Life upon the Cross, which was the raising of *Lazarus* from the Dead, was done within a Mile or two of the Town, not long before the Passover, when many Persons were present, that came to mourn with the Sisters for the loss of their Brother; and when others were daily coming up

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from all quarters to purify themselves before the Feast, without which they might not lawfully eat the Passover: In a word, St. *John* begins his Gospel with asserting the Divinity of the Son of God, and continues it throughout with recording Speeches and Actions of his of a publick nature, and such as would lead considering Men to find out who he was, that the Church in all Ages to whom he writ, might see that our Lord manifested himself so far as was consistent with his original design from his entrance upon his Ministry to the time of his Death.

IV. I would now earnestly desire those that are at any time disturbed when they meet with any passage in the New Testament, which may lead them at first sight to think of the *Son of God* more meanly than they ought, to compare the passage with others in which the Excellency of his Nature, and the Dignity of his Office, are put in a full and clear Light. This is what all Men think just in merely human Writings. Those that are concerned for the Reputation of any Book, or any set of Books whatsoever, demand usually in all contested Cases, that all possible justice should be done them, by comparing one thing with another, and by explaining what appears dark by what is certainly manifest: Let us follow the same method here: Did the Son tell the Disciples that he did not *know* the DAY and HOUR? Be it so, yet we find these Disciples two days after he made this Declaration, unanimously confess that he KNEW ALL THINGS. This Confession he found no fault with, I would entreat them to consider that St. *John* explains those sort of things particularly which the former Evangelist left untouched. He wrote when a new Generation was sprung up, many of whom made it their business to depreciate the *Son of God*. St. *John's* authority therefore in Questions of this nature ought to have the utmost weight. He ought to be look'd upon as a later witness,

ness, who confirms and explains the Evidence that former Witnesses had given before. And then I might safely put it to the Conscience of any understanding Man living, who had not interested himself in the Question before, whether upon reading his Gospel after he had carefully read the other three, he would not conclude that *St. John* intended that Men should believe that *Jesus Christ* was not only the *Son of God*, but *God that was made Flesh*, and that *dwelt among us*. This Conclusion a *Mahometan*, a *Persee*, or a *Bramine* that could read the New Testament would now certainly make, and this Conclusion the old Heathen Enemies to Christianity certainly made. *Celsus* and *Porphyrus* knew full well that *Jesus Christ* was declared to be *God* as well as *Man* in the New Testament, and it is not unlikely that the absurdities of the *Arian* system (compared with the Doctrine taught by *St. John* in his Gospel) which was zealously maintained and propagated by *Constantius* throughout the whole Eastern Empire, might be one great stumbling block to his near kinsman *Julian*, and the means of his apostatizing to Heathenism. A Man of Sagacity and parts, as these three Men were to a very great degree, must see that the last of the four Evangelists (by whom the three former are to be explained in difficult cases touched upon by both) plainly asserted *Jesus Christ* to be *God*.

It would, I fear, be Impiety to suppose that the wise and holy God would suffer such a stumbling block to be laid in the way of Mankind, as is laid in the New Testament, if *Jesus Christ* were only a Creature as he must be, if he is not truly God. And therefore since the Questions now so warmly and so unhappily debated among us, are upon a subject so confessedly above our Comprehension, as the Divine nature indisputably is, ought we not to endeavour not to be wise above what is written? Should we not contentedly bring our understanding to submit

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mit to what he revealed in plain words, or would it not be prudent for those Gentlemen, who are bold enough to maintain the opposite Opinion, in this (at least) to imitate the conduct of *Pontius Pilate*, who, when the *Jews* told him that *Jesus made himself the SON of GOD*, was the MORE AFRAID, *John xix. 7, 8.* The Author of this Revelation has a right to our belief, and we have all the Assurance imaginable, that if we interpret what appears difficult, by what we see is manifest, we shall never fall into any great mistakes.

F I N I S.



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